1. (currently amended) A The method of claim 16, ~~comprising the steps of:~~

~~coupling a patient to an energy source via a universal electrode suitable for use upon both adults and children;~~

~~electronically determining whether the patient requires defibrillation; and~~

wherein determining comprises determining that the patient is a child; and

wherein delivering comprises delivering an electrical waveform characterized by less than or equal to approximately 150 Joules of energy to the patient.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) The method of claim 1,

wherein the universal electrode comprises an electrode having a foil layer with an opening disposed therein.

4. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

compensating for patient-dependent impedance during electrical waveform delivery,

wherein the universal electrode comprises an electrode having a foil layer with an opening disposed therein.

5. (currently amended) A The method of claim 16, ~~comprising the steps of:~~

~~coupling a patient to a universal electrode suitable for use upon both adults and children;~~

~~electronically determining whether the patient requires defibrillation; and~~

wherein determining comprises determining that the patient is a child; and

wherein delivering comprises delivering a first electrical waveform characterized by greater than approximately 25 Joules and less than approximately 50 Joules of energy to the patient.

6. (canceled)

7. (original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of determining whether defibrillation was successful.

8. (original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the steps of:

determining whether defibrillation was successful; and

delivering a second electrical waveform characterized by an energy greater than that associated with the first electrical waveform to the patient.

9. (original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the steps of:

determining whether defibrillation was successful; and

delivering a second electrical waveform characterized by an energy greater than that associated with the first electrical waveform to the patient,

wherein the second electrical waveform is characterized by an energy greater than 50 Joules.

10. (original) The method of claim 5,

wherein the universal electrode comprises an electrode having a foil layer with an opening disposed therein.

11. (currently amended) A The method of claim 16, ~~comprising the steps of:~~

~~electronically determining whether a patient requires defibrillation;~~

wherein determining comprises determining that the patient is a child;

wherein delivering comprises delivering a first electrical waveform characterized by an energy greater than approximately 25 Joules and less than approximately 50 Joules to the patient;

further comprising determining whether defibrillation was successful; and

further comprising successively delivering higher-energy electrical waveforms to the patient until a delivery of an electrical waveform characterized by a maximum energy target occurs.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the step of successively delivering higher-energy electrical waveforms to the patent is performed according to an energy increment plan.

13. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the maximum energy target equals approximately 100 Joules.

14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 11 ~~further comprising the step of coupling the patient to an energy source via a universal electrode suitable for use with both adults and children~~, wherein the universal electrode comprises an electrode having a foil layer with an opening disposed therein.

16. (original) A method comprising the steps of:

coupling a patient to an energy source via a universal electrode suitable for use upon both adults and children;

determining whether the patient is an adult or a child;

electronically determining whether the patient requires defibrillation;

delivering a first electrical waveform characterized by an energy level appropriate for an adult in the event that the patient is an adult; and

delivering a second electrical waveform characterized by an energy level appropriate for a child in the event that the patient is a child.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein the first electrical waveform is characterized by an energy of approximately 150 Joules.

18. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein the second electrical waveform is characterized by an energy of approximately 50 Joules.

19. (currently amended) An automated external defibrillation system suitable for use upon both adults and children comprising:

an energy source;

an electrode interface;

an electrode signal management unit coupled to the energy source and the electrode interface;

a control unit coupled to the electrode signal management unit;

an adult/pediatric mode control that indicates whether the automated external defibrillation system is to operate in an adult mode or a pediatric mode; and

a set of universal electrodes suitable for use upon both adults and children, the universal electrodes coupled to the electrode interface.

20. (original) The automatic external defibrillation system of claim 19, wherein the universal electrode comprises an electrode having a foil layer with an opening disposed therein.

21. (currently amended) An automated external defibrillation system suitable for use upon both adults and children comprising:

an energy source;

an electrode interface;

an electrode signal management unit coupled to the energy source and the electrode interface;

a control unit coupled to the electrode signal management unit; and

a set of universal electrodes suitable for use upon both adults and children, the universal electrodes coupled to the electrode interface.

22. (original) The automated external defibrillation system of claim 21, wherein the system is configured to deliver approximately 150 Joules of energy to the universal electrodes.

23. (original) The automated external defibrillation system (10) of claim 21, wherein the system is configured to deliver less than 150 Joules of energy to the universal electrodes.